

Mississippi PROFILE

A Publication of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health **SPRING/SUMMER 2016**

Department of Mental Health Recognizes May as Mental Health Month

The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) is recognizing the month of May as National Mental Health Month, a time to reinforce and share its mission of supporting a better tomorrow by making a difference in the lives of all Mississippians with behavioral health or substance use disorders.

This recognition began 67 years ago by Mental Health America, a nonprofit dedicated to the needs of those living with mental illness, to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of good mental health for everyone. This year's theme, "Life with a Mental Illness," seeks to share what life is like for those living with a mental illness – the struggles faced by everyday people, but coupled with an illness that is often misunderstood rarely talked about openly.

"Mental illnesses are much more common than many people realize," said Diana Mikula, Executive Director of the Department of Mental Health. "About one in five adults experiences mental health issues, and about one in 10 young people experience major mental health issues as well. Mental health issues affect people of all ages, races and backgrounds.

"Despite that, mental illness is still something many people don't talk about. We want to encourage people to talk about their health, get help if it is needed, and to be free from judgement whatever their health condition may be."

The call to action for people to share how their illnesses affect them is a hope that others will look past the illness, see the person there, and know mental illness is not only common, but treatable and that help is available. For

others living with a mental illness themselves, knowing that help is available and that recovery is possible can make a world of difference.

Sandra Caron is a Certified Peer Support Specialist at Central Mississippi Residential Center (CMRC) in Newton. Her job is to support the residents at through her own unique perspective – that of someone who has lived with and is in recovery from a mental illness.

She knows what many of them are experiencing, having lived through it herself. Once she received her diagnosis, her life changed completely.

She wasn't able to work, had severe financial problems, and her friends and family did not understand what she was going through. She said she lost her own self-worth and her own identity.

Mental illnesses are much more common than many people realize. About 1 in 5 adults experiences mental health issues...

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Supporting a *better* tomorrow...**TODAY!**



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The Mississippi Profile is devoted to providing the public with information about services provided or administered by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. It also strives to increase public awareness and knowledge about mental illness, intellectual/developmental disabilities, substance use, and Alzheimer's disease and other dementia to improve health and quality of life.

This publication is free of charge to persons interested in mental health, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use, Alzheimer's disease and other dementia, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, or the individuals it serves. It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health to comply with federal and state laws assuring equal opportunities of employment and services.

The editor reserves the right to edit all materials printed in this publication. Send requests for items to be included in the newsletter and other inquiries to:

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Spring 2016 issue of Mississippi Profile, the quarterly newsletter from the Department of Mental Health. Since the Winter issue was released, a lot has happened. The 2016 Legislative Session proved challenging for many state agencies, but as you read this issue, you can see that it also showed there are many supporters of the public mental health system in Mississippi. We appreciate everyone who has lent their support to us over the past several months.



This issue is released in May, just as the department and many others throughout the state and the country are preparing to recognize National Mental Health Month. It is a time to remember that support for the public mental health system extends not just to agencies like DMH, but to the people who need our services. You will be able to hear in this issue from just a couple of people who have struggled with their own issues, but are now living in recovery thanks to the support they received. They are now able to support others, and it's wonderful to hear those kinds of success stories.

Please read on to see what else has been happening with DMH, our employees, and the people we serve. Thank you again to all of our supporters, partners, and employees who work to provide a better tomorrow for our state.

Sincerely,

Diana S. Mikula,
Executive Director

Her recovery began the day she saw a new doctor who actually asked her what she wanted to get out of her therapy.

“I was stunned, and had no answer,” Caron said. “No one had ever asked me what I wanted, or what goals I wanted to achieve.”

Her new doctor encouraged her to take part in her own treatment and helped her to learn coping skills and accountability. She now has her own home, a wonderful support network, and she sets and reaches her own goals.

“Life is no longer about the illness I have. It’s one of knowing I am in recovery,” Caron said. “Moving into recovery has been life changing. Peer support has provided meaning and purpose to my life. I continue to encourage my peers to realize recovery is possible.”

Others who have not lived with a mental illness themselves are also working to offer the same encouragement and positivity to their friends and peers. One such person is Michaela Moore, a Miss Mississippi contestant who currently holds the title of Miss Riverland 2016. For the past two years, her platform has been “Shining a Light on Life,” and focuses on suicide prevention and awareness.

It began when she was in high school and was a member of a performing arts group with the goal of encouraging the prevention of substance use, peer pressure and bullying.

“I began to notice through this that there was one area no one ever really spoke about: depression,” she said. “I started to do research, and I was shocked to realize how high the statistics are for teen suicide and those affected by depression.”

She realized not only that many of her friends were facing

a battle, but that many also believed they were facing it alone. She began working to get students involved in activities they enjoyed, things that made them happy and took their minds off of their temporary problems. She began working on her platform because, as she saw it, depression and suicide were elephants in the room.

“Many are afraid to talk about depression or its effects. I worked off of the idea that change can begin with one person, and I encourage high school student that I speak with to take that mindset as well,” Moore said.

Throughout the month, people living with mental illnesses will be embracing the “Life with a Mental Illness” theme and sharing their personal stories on

Twitter and Facebook with the hashtag #mentalillnessfeelslike. It is a way to speak up, to share their points of view with others and to help others figure out if they too are showing signs of a mental illness.

It is important to know that mental illnesses are common, treatable and help is available. Here in Mississippi, the Department of Mental Health operates a Help Line that is available 24 hours a day at 1-877-210-8513. It is important to reach out for help, and also to speak out and share stories of recovery and hope.

Moore said she has constantly been amazed and moved by the responses she has received since she began speaking out, including those from her close friends. She is also glad to be able to say she knows others who have struggled are now staying healthy and doing very well in life.

“These are the kinds of stories I want people to know – there is so much to look forward to and so much that each of us has yet to experience,” she said.

For the complete conversation with Miss Riverland Michaela Moore, please see page 4.

“Despite that, mental illness is still something many people don’t talk about. We want to encourage people to talk about their health, get help if it is needed, and to be free from judgement whatever their health condition may be.”



A CONVERSATION WITH MISS RIVERLAND

Michaela Moore

Miss Riverland Michaela Moore recently reached out to the Department of Mental Health to discuss her platform, “Shining a Light on Life,” and met with

several DMH employees face to face this past April. She was kind enough to share some more thoughts on her platform and why it is important to her in the brief discussion below:

Why is this your platform? How did it first come to your attention that depression was such a common issue that people of all ages deal with?

My platform is called “Shining a Light on Life”- Suicide Prevention and Awareness. When I was a student in high school, I was a founding member of a performing arts group called SOAR (Students Offering Alternative Roads). Our main focus was to put on skits, songs, and dances encouraging the prevention of drug/alcohol abuse, peer pressure, bullying, and other areas that affect many teenagers. I began to notice through this that there was one area no one ever really spoke about: depression. I started to do research, and I was shocked to realize how high the statistics are for teen suicide and those affected by depression. This was before my position as a titleholder, but as someone very involved in the arts, I began to speak out about depression. I watched too many of my friends face a battle they believed they were in alone. I aimed to get students involved and find something they enjoy - something that makes them happy and takes their mind off of temporary problems that bring them down.

How did you begin to address this as your platform and start the learning process about this issue?

As Miss Riverland, I started the idea of Suicide Prevention as my platform because it is truly the elephant

in the room. Many are afraid to talk about depression or its effects. I worked off of the idea that change can begin with one person, and I encourage high school students that I speak to to take this mindset, as well. I did my research on the statistics of depression-influenced suicide not only nationwide, but within Mississippi alone. The rising number of suicides throughout the years is concerning and, frankly, heartbreaking. If we can work together to change this and influence people positively, I would love to see a decrease in these numbers in years to come. Right now, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in our state, and Mississippi is listed as one of the 10 most depressing states in the US. These are things that we can absolutely change.

Since developing this platform, what has surprised you the most about what you’ve seen or heard from other people?

Since I’ve begun speaking on my platform (which has been two years now), I am constantly amazed and moved by the responses I have received. Many have come to me, including close friends, sharing their own stories and attempts on their life. These are people that exude happiness and people you would never expect once wanted to end their own life. Everyone who has told me their stories also continues by saying that they immediately regretted their decision when an attempt on their life was made. This is true, statistically, as well. Over 95% of people who have attempted suicide say they regret this decision and could find a solution to every single problem in life at the moment death would have occurred. I think it’s important to emphasize to those battling with their mental health that suicide is a permanent solution to temporary problems. The way one feels today may not be the same a week from now or a year from now. It is making the conscious decision to seek help and gain support in fighting these battles that helps those with depression know they are not alone.

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Looking ahead to even beyond the Miss Mississippi pageant, how do you see this platform playing a role in your future? Even if your career takes you in an entirely different direction, will you still seek to find ways to spread suicide prevention awareness?

This platform will always play a role in my life. Even before I realized the difference I could make through “Shining a Light on Life,” I tried to make a difference in the lives of those around me. I once had a friend look at me when we were in the eighth grade and ask, “What would you do if I wasn’t here anymore?” That sent me on a huge spiel of how much she had to live for and how much life she had to look forward to. I’m happy to say she is now succeeding in a very fruitful career and engaged to a man who adores her. These are the kinds of stories I want people to know—there is so much to look forward to and so much that each of us has yet to experience.

Life can change and people can change, and through my platform I want to help people do just that. I have a side project of my platform entitled “Points of Light,” in which friends and connections of mine all over the world are speaking on my platform and spreading this quality of life in their own communities. I want to continue this, Miss America or not. My ultimate career goal would be as a performer on Broadway, and I would like to continue to donate to mental health research and establish programs for high school students as I achieve these goals. Again, change begins with one person, so why not you?

Michaela Moore
Miss Riverland

DMH AND DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES FIND SUCCESS WITH SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Everyone knows that a meaningful day is an important part of life, especially for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. For many, a meaningful day includes employment where a person has the opportunity to grow and help others.

The Mississippi Department of Mental Health and Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in July 2015 to help provide that meaningful employment to at least 75 people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD).

The MOA also specified joint training activities. To date, 30 people have been employed and 300 staff from the DMH, MDRS, and the Division of Medicaid have been trained about implementation of the MOA. In order to be eligible for Supported Employment through the ID/DD Waiver, a person first has to go through MDRS, per federal regulations. Staff from these agencies were trained in the referral process and the responsibilities of each agency.

Mr. Brown is a prime example of the difference Supported Employment can make in someone’s life. He is 35 years old, has cerebral palsy and he uses a wheelchair to get around in the community.

MDRS staff began seeking job opportunities for Mr. Brown based on his stated preferences that were expressed during a Person Centered Planning Meeting. After negotiating with the potential employer and looking at skills matching, he was hired by Lowe’s in November 2014. MDRS provided a job trainer until August 2015, when he was deemed to be successful in his job placement.

MDRS job trainers supported Mr. Brown by teaching him the skills he needed for the job and also by establishing natural supports at Lowe’s so that when MDRS services ended, he would have support from his co-workers on the job.

Nearing the completion of MDRS job training services, he was referred to an ID/DD Waiver provider in Tupelo to become his Extended Service Provider. An Extended Service Provider offers job support to the extent needed by a person after MDRS has faded their services. After having Supported Employment added to Mr. Brown’s ID/DD Waiver Plan of Services and Supports, the ID/DD Waiver provider stepped in and is supporting Mr. Brown so that he can continue to be successful at his job.

Mr. Brown works five hours per day, six days per week. His job is to greet people at Lowe’s as they come in the door and direct them to the appropriate department to find what they need. As a result of his helpfulness, Mr. Brown has had two customers specifically

HUDSPETH CENTER EMPLOYEE RECOGNIZED FOR GOLD MEDAL IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

As the Mississippi Legislature busies itself with all manner of bills that affect people and agencies throughout the state, members also find time to recognize single individuals for contributions they have made to their communities.

In this year's session, an employee in Hudspeth Regional Center's Supported Employment program was recognized for an outstanding achievement he worked for over the past year. Senate Concurrent Resolution 505 honored Brandon resident Kyle Dutiel for earning three gold medals in equestrian competitions in the Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles last summer.

Kyle earned a gold medal on July 29 in the English Equitation competition, and then followed up that performance the next two days, earning additional gold medals in the Dressage competition and the Working Trails competition.

The Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities. More than 4.5 million athletes in 170 countries have participated in the organization. Athletes are children and adults with intellectual disabilities from all around the world.

This year, Kyle was one of 6,500 athletes who competed in what was the largest Special Olympics in history. It ran from July 25, 2015 to August 2, 2015.

This was Kyle's first time to win the gold medal, but he's no stranger to winning medals in the Special Olympics. He also competed in 1999

and in 2003, where he won a bronze medal and a silver medal, respectively.

Kyle worked at Mississippi State Hospital, and it was there he met an employee, Debbie Waller, who encouraged his family to help Kyle with independent living. He worked there for about a year and then came to work at Hudspeth Regional Center.



It was working there in the Supported Employment program, along with his participation in the Special Olympics, that helped develop his personality, said his mother Linda. She credited Debbie Waller with giving Kyle his first chance at working independently and Hudspeth employee Freddie Townsend for developing his love of horses.

"Freddie took him to North Carolina and Ireland to the Special Olympic World Games," Linda said. "Freddie helped make Kyle the man he is today."

Freddie Townsend passed away last year, but there is no doubt he would be incredibly proud of Kyle's achievement in last year's Special Olympics.

"I really like to ride. Freddie Townsend had the greatest influence on me," Kyle said. "And the best thing about riding in the Olympics is getting to go different places and meet new people."



IDD Day at the Capitol recognized on April 6

Dozens of people joined the Mississippi Department of Mental Health in celebrating Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Awareness Month at the annual IDD “Day at the Capitol” on April 6, 2016 at the State Capitol.

An annual event, the goal of the recognition is to increase the public’s knowledge and awareness of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and how they participate and contribute to their communities. Service providers were available at the event to provide information to legislators and others at the Capitol.



Dozens of people, including DMH employees, service providers and service recipients joined together on April 6 to recognize IDD Day at the Capitol.

“We have been working to build a statewide system that promotes and encourages person-centered services and supports, and I encourage all Mississippians to learn more about this,” DMH Executive Director Diana Mikula said. “We want to support a better tomorrow for individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability, and our supporters and partners in the community are helping us make great strides in realizing that vision each and every day.”

Intellectual and developmental disabilities cover a broad range of often misunderstood characteristics. An intellectual disability is characterized by limitations in intellectual functioning and challenges in a variety of everyday social and practical skills. A developmental disability is attributed to a cognitive or physical impairment that results in the need for supports in areas such as personal care, communication, and independent living.

More than 41,000 fellow Mississippians live with intellectual or developmental disabilities, affecting numerous members of their families, friends and their communities. Under the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, the state operates six IDD programs – Boswell Regional Center in Magee, Ellisville State School in Ellisville, Hudspeth Regional Center in Whitfield, Mississippi Adolescent Center in Brookhaven, North Mississippi Regional Center in Oxford and South Mississippi Regional Center in Long Beach.

These programs are also a primary vehicle for delivering services in the community, helping to offer each and every Mississippian the choice of living where they would like to and having the opportunity to live to their full potential.

Governor Phil Bryant recently declared March as Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, noting that people with disabilities, their families, friends and neighbors encourage everyone to focus on the abilities of all people.

“The most effective way to increase this awareness is through everyone’s active participation in community activities and the openness to learn and acknowledge each individual’s own contribution,” the proclamation reads.

Renee Brett, DMH Bureau Director for IDD Services, said raising awareness for disabilities and people living with them can aid in connecting people to their communities.

“People with and without disabilities can come together, working side by side to help form strong and diverse communities,” Brett said. “Everyone has a contribution to make to their community.”

“We are grateful to everyone who joined us on April 6 at the Capitol to learn how they could make or support those contributions.”

Specialized Treatment Facility Client Returns to Share His Success

On March 4, Sturgis Baxter, a 25-year-old Tishomingo resident, stepped on to the campus of Specialized Treatment Facility (STF), but it wasn't his first time to be there.

Instead, Baxter was returning to STF for the first time since he was discharged in 2007 at the age of 16. Baxter says he made a decision to come back and share his experiences at STF with the residents there now and tell them they have positive options to choose in their lives, and the possibility of a bright future is ahead of them.

"I'm living proof," he said. "I go to school and work in computer science and I volunteer with the Boys and Girls Club."

But, he says, that wasn't always the case and it wasn't easy to get where he is.

"I couldn't get anything right. I was lost, wandering in the dark, didn't know what to do. The people here at STF, they helped me," Baxter said. "They gave me the tools to overcome my obstacles, but I still got in trouble when I left here."

STF is a psychiatric residential treatment facility for adolescents who have been diagnosed with a mental illness. Its mission is to promote and strengthen the mental health and the education of the people it serves. While there, clients participate in individual, group, and family



Sturgis Baxter with STF staff members

therapy sessions, recreational activities and attend school at the program. Through it all, they are also expected to work on developing positive life skills.

Despite his time receiving these services, Baxter experienced struggles with drug use. At 18 he joined the Air Force, but while waiting to start basic training he went to jail for burglary.

Fourteen months behind bars convinced him he didn't like who he saw when he looked in the mirror.

"I just knew there was a brighter future out there for me. I just had to find where it was. When you begin to believe in yourself, others will too." Baxter said he knew he needed some help, but he first looked inward so he could begin to help himself.

"I sought help from within myself. No one else will ever be able to help you unless you first learn to help yourself. I looked inward for the strength and resources I needed to clamber out of the hole I was in," he said. "There were many days that I saw failure, but failure was not an endpoint. Rather, I allowed failure to serve as a learning experience and opportunity for growth." It was after he began working that hard for himself that a dear friend lended a hand to help him in his struggles.

"By myself, change was not likely to endure as



Sturgis Baxter speaks to students at Specialized Treatment Facility.

long as it has. I would be a liar to say that all of my accomplishments have been solely due to my own efforts," he said.

Today, Baxter is making up for the time he says he wasted. He's a full time college student and along with some friends, formed a non-profit organization to mentor young men called Men's Character Development Association (MCDA). He also has a home based computer and cell phone repair business. He told the clients at STF they too can find success.

"Don't let your tools and your gifts go to waste. Use them to help yourself and other people," he said.

That's what he has been working to do with the MCDA. Formed by himself and another friend, they are legally incorporated and have a board of directors and are working on developing the infrastructure and financing they need to sustain the organization long term. The MCDA's core values are integrity, respect, responsibility, leadership, discipline, love and unity. "So many men in our communities and society as a whole have often grown up without or never had a good male role model," Baxter said.

That was an issue he struggled with himself when he was a teenager. Through the MCDA, he and his partners hope to establish leaders in communities throughout Mississippi that will eventually offer programs, events and services

that demonstrate those core values and act as positive role models.

He remembers one specific time when he was at STF and someone came to speak – a gentleman about 60 years old who was still in school and studying engineering.

"I saw this man as a life-long learner, someone who craved knowledge and wisdom. From the moment he spoke, I knew there was something about this man I admired," Baxter said. "He had a deep love for science and how things work and that resonated with me."

Even though he can't remember his name, Baxter remembers the impression that gentleman left on him, and it's something he hopes he can do for others. It's part of the reason he went back to speak at STF. "Giving back is the only way I can fathom becoming a more fulfilled person," Baxter said. "What good is it to hoard treasure to yourself? I have a wealth of love, passion, experience, and wisdom to share with others. To not share it would be of no gain for myself or for anyone else."

It is his desire to see others prosper, succeed, and have lives full of joy and peace.

"If the lessons of my previous mistakes can help another avoid the same pitfalls, then I will gladly share those experiences," he said.

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indicate to management how helpful he was and that they admired Lowe's for hiring someone who might not have otherwise been employed.

This is just one example of how the partnership between DMH and MDRS is helping make a difference in the lives of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities in Mississippi and enabling people to remain successful in the community.

Mr. Brown is one of many success stories for Supported Employment and hopefully only one of many more yet to come.

MARK STOVALL NAMED ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES BUREAU DIRECTOR



Mark Stovall has been named Director of the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Services with the Department of Mental Health.

Stovall has worked in the substance use field for more than 14 years as a Substance

Abuse Adolescent Therapist, Director of a residential adolescent treatment facility, Director of a Crisis Stabilization Unit, Adolescent Services Coordinator, Clinical Services Coordinator for the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Service, and Director of the Division of Treatment Services for the bureau.

Stovall received his Master of Community Counseling from Delta State University. He is a Certified Addictions Therapist and a Certified Mental Health Therapist. He also serves as the National Treatment Network representative for Mississippi with the National Association of State Alcohol & Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD).

His duties include the provision of a systematic network of providers offering the best possible care for substance use disorder treatment in Mississippi. He has a personal and working knowledge of the state's recovery community and is an avid supporter of Mississippians seeking recovery.

"Mark has extensive experience in this field, and we are glad he is able to take on this new role with the department," said Diana Mikula, DMH Executive Director. "We look forward to his continued work supporting Mississippians in recovery from alcohol and substance use issues. With his experience, I know he will be making a difference in the lives of people each and every day."

KENNETH LEGGETT RETIRES AS DIRECTOR OF BUREAU OF ADMINISTRATION

Kenneth Leggett has retired from service with the Department of Mental Health as of April 30, 2016.

He started with DMH in 1984 as an Accountant Auditor fresh out of school. He has Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and he received a Master of Public Policy and Administration from Mississippi State University in 2001.

He is a Certified Public Accountant and has served as Field Auditor, Director of the Audit Division, Director of Audit and Grants Management, and most recently as the Bureau Director of Administration.

In the past two years, he has become a Licensed Massage Therapist. His concentration is on posture corrective therapy and muscle repair through massage techniques and he looks forward to spending more time building his practice after retirement.

"I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with so many talented, kind and giving people in my career with this organization," Leggett said. "This has truly been a special place to work, and I have built friendships that will last a lifetime."

Kenneth has been an invaluable presence in the office over the years, and we will most definitely miss him being with the Department of Mental Health," DMH Executive Director Diana Mikula said. "We wish him the best and hope he enjoys his retirement as much as we have enjoyed working with him."

KELLY BRELAND NAMED BUREAU DIRECTOR FOR ADMINISTRATION

Kelly Breland has been named Director of the Bureau of Administration with the Department of Mental Health, effective as of May 1.

Breland has a long history with DMH, having first joined the agency in 2001 at Mississippi Adolescent Center in Brookhaven. He served there as an Assistant Facility Director with oversight of support functions, including business management, dietary services and the physical plant. He has also served at Mississippi State Hospital, and he joined the DMH Central Office in 2014.

"We were glad to have Kelly join the DMH Central Office last year, and we are excited he has accepted



this new role as Bureau Director for Administration," said DMH Executive Director Diana Mikula. "We will miss Kenneth, but I know the Bureau of Administration is in very capable hands with Mr. Breland."

Breland earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Mississippi College and a Master of Business Administration from Mississippi College as well.

"I appreciate the opportunity to be in this new and challenging role," Breland said. "I look forward to continuing to work with my friends and colleagues in the mental health system to help improve the lives of so many in our state."

DMH SERVICES REDUCED DUE TO BUDGET CUTS

As a result of funding reductions in its Fiscal Year 2017 budget, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) will be implementing a reduction in force and a reduction of services.

In the 2016 legislative session, DMH received a cut of approximately 4.4%, or \$8.3 million in state support funds for FY17. DMH cannot absorb a cut of that magnitude without a decrease in services. The majority of the services and supports that will be impacted are provided using 100% general funds. Absorbing this cut is further complicated by the fact that DMH received a 1.5% cut and a 0.43% cut in FY16. In response to the required budget cuts over the past several years, DMH has focused on impacting the least number of people in the least negative way.

Because of the reduced funding appropriated for FY17, DMH must close some services. DMH's goal is to minimize the number of layoffs by offering positions currently on recruitment to staff who work in the programs affected by these cuts. The closure of services and supports will impact local communities throughout the entire state. Below are some of the services that will be impacted.

- **Mississippi State Hospital –** Closure of the 29-bed Acute Medical Psychiatric Service. This unit served 66 people in FY15. The Medical Psychiatric Service provides services to people who have a major mental disorder and a complex medical condition that requires close monitoring and supervision. No additional admissions will be made to this service.

- **Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) –** Closure of the 42-bed Male Chemical Dependency Unit which serves people in need of treatment services for substance use disorders. This unit served 429 males in FY15. Treatment includes a specialized medical detoxification program, basic medical care, group therapy, counseling, family education, motivational interviewing and introduction to 12-Step Recovery. MSH will admit and treat only those people who have already been involuntarily committed for treatment and are currently waiting for services. MSH services and facilities will not be available for any additional male individuals committed by a court for chemical dependency services.

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• **East Mississippi State Hospital (EMSH)** – Closure of the 25-bed Male Chemical Dependency Unit, which serves individuals in need of treatment services for substance use disorders. This unit served 330 people in FY15. Treatment includes a specialized medical detoxification program, basic medical care, group therapy, counseling, family education, motivational interviewing and introduction to 12-Step Recovery. EMSH will admit and treat only those people who have already been involuntarily committed for treatment and are currently waiting for services. EMSH services and facilities will not be available for any additional male individuals committed by a court for chemical dependency services.

As a result of the closure of the Male Chemical Dependency Units at MSH and EMSH, there will no longer be state-operated male chemical dependency beds available in the state. Other treatment options are available in the community through DMH Certified Providers that offer primary residential services for adult males on a sliding scale fee and will be able to work with Chancery Courts for people under an alcohol and drug commitment order. The majority of these services are offered by local Community Mental Health Centers throughout the state.

• **South Mississippi State Hospital (SMSH)** – Closure of five psychiatric beds which serve people in need of treatment for a serious mental illness. These five beds serve more than 80 people each year. The closure of these five beds has the potential to increase the waiting list for the 15 counties in SMSH's catchment area.

The people we serve are the heart of everything we do, which is why cutting services and supports is so difficult.

• **Ellisville State School** – Discontinuation of the provision of early intervention services, which will result in the loss of Special Instruction services to 128 children between the ages of birth to three. Special Instruction is designed to enhance development through routine-based intervention and parent training/coaching in the child's natural environment. Children are provided with opportunities to learn, grow and play while enhancing their developmental skills.

Other DMH Programs are currently evaluating the impact of the budget cut and the potential effect on services statewide. Any additional budget cuts will result in additional cuts to services. The agency is also working to determine the extent to which programs will be affected by SB 2362, which swept funding from DMH's budget for fees paid to certain agencies.

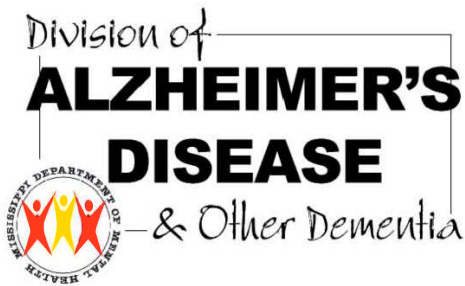
"It has been a very difficult process to determine how to take these cuts," said Diana Mikula, DMH Executive Director. "The agency's main focus has been and will continue to be ensuring the health and welfare of the people currently receiving services. Reduced funding requires a reduction in staff, which requires a reduction in service so the safety of people served and staff is not put at risk due to understaffed services. Since 2008, DMH has been reducing the

number of employees working in programs across the state. In 2008, DMH had 8,971 employees. In 2015, DMH had 7,371. That is a difference of approximately 1,600 employees."

This is not the first time DMH has had to reduce services and supports due to budget cuts. While the agency has been able to absorb some of the budget cuts since 2008, the cuts have resulted in the downsizing of programs, fewer employees, loss of early intervention programs, and the loss or reduction of other services.

Over the last several years, the number of adult psychiatric beds at MSH and EMSH has been reduced by 500. MSH consolidated 11 nursing home facilities into 10 facilities. The consolidation resulted in the closure of 36 beds. In June 2010, DMH closed a 16-bed unit at the Mississippi Adolescent Center in Brookhaven for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, leaving 32 beds. In 2009 and 2010, DMH closed several early intervention programs across the state. The programs were designed to enhance the development of infants, toddlers and young children with disabilities or children who are at risk for developing disabilities.

"The people we serve are the heart of everything we do, which is why cutting services and supports is so difficult," Mikula said. "DMH's organizational mission and vision are vital, but they mean little apart from the story that explains why what we are doing is important in the first place. That story is the people we serve - and their family members, their friends - everyone that we know whose life has been touched by mental illness, IDD and/or substance use."



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